

Carlisle Agricultural Commission

Meeting Minutes

March 20, 2014

Present: Andrew Rodgers
Leslie Thomas
Peter Mastromario
Jack Valentine
Judy Asarkof
Steve Carlin
Marlow Duffy
Kay Fairweather
Launa Zimmaro

Next meeting: April 7, 2014, 7:00 pm

Agenda: Introductions
Old Business
New Business

I. Introductions

New meeting attendee Launa Zimmaro was introduced to the group. She has interest in joining the commission as an alternate member. She needs to see the Charlene Hinton about steps to make this official.

II. Old Business

Minutes Approval

Judy read last meeting's minutes. They were approved unanimously.

Meeting organization

It was agreed that we would rotate the minutes taking task. This week it will be Steve Huberman. Leslie will be the meeting chair for this meeting.

What is a farm

Discussion continued around the definition of farm with respect to the commission, specifically the Carlisle Farm Brochure and listings on the Commission's web pages.

Andrew will look into the state's definition. He mentioned that Chip Poutass had put together the Concord Commission's brochure and may have some insight into how they addressed this issue. Judy questioned whether we want to be too specific so as not to exclude anyone interested and Leslie concurred suggesting that maybe the brochure listing would be a subset of the web site listing, implying that the brochure listing are inviting more public exposure.

Judy brought up a concern (also addressed by the Concord Agricultural Commission) around some of the wording used in the publications. Specifically, we don't want to scare people with working such as "right to farm" and instead describe them as "farming by laws".

Budget

We continued the discussion on whether the Commission has a budget. Currently we don't have a budget. It was suggested that we can work with other town groups and can request funding

from the town if we had any specific needs. Peter suggested that we look at the state Agricultural Commission Handbook for ideas. Peter will come up with a proposal (see new business).

Sponsoring Activities

The discussion continued around what kind of activities the group can sponsor and/or be involved in. Movies, speakers and other educational events were mentioned as well as publicizing any related events. Nothing specific has been planned.

Andrew mentioned that Brian Donohue will be speaking about his vision or what is happening with New England agriculture. This will be at the First Religious Society on April 10th at 7pm. We agreed that we should include this on an "events" link on the Commission's web pages.

III. New Business

Brochures and Web Site.

Andrew looked into the cost of producing a brochure, around \$500. Kate suggested that maybe we can self-print, since we don't have a budget and that the initial cost will be low.

Jack questioned the purpose of a brochure. Judy and Marlow suggested a few educational and commercial reasons including something looking for good local produce, families looking activities, schools looking for educational opportunities with respect to local agriculture and an individual's looking for educational possibilities such as gardening information.

In addition to the brochure and web site, Marlow suggested Facebook exposure.

Leslie thought that we should start with the web site and gather ideas for the brochure.

Steve mentioned that we need to work with Elizabeth Barnett to see how we can directly manage and update our web site. He will contact Elizabeth to discuss.

Events

Marlow mentioned that on Wednesday, March 26th, there is an Aggie day at the State House.

Andrew mentioned the talk by Brian Donohue at the FRS on April 10th, 7pm.

Commission's Mission Statement

Peter initiated a discussion on the state handbook. He thought it was a useful document and suggested that we all read it. He questioned the mission statement and thought that the goal of keeping agriculture alive in the community was missing. Judy said that the mission was approved by the town and is not easy to change. Launa suggested that we come up with a guiding set of principals instead of changing the mission statement. We concluded that we should list the Commission's goals on the web site. This can evolve over time.

Some concepts include raising awareness of how agriculture affects the community and that the health of the land and the community are linked.

Launa likes the idea of giving presentations about local and sustainable practices

Tidbits

Andrew nominated Peter as the new chair. The vote was unanimous. Peter is the new chair.

IV. Next Meeting

April 7th, 7pm.

Old Business

We will discuss specifics around what we want to add to the web site. Some initial ideas are:

- Events
- Goals/Guiding principles
- Agriculture in Carlisle

This will include a concrete discussion of what our goals are.

We will discuss the contents of the Handbook.

Steve will report on the process for updating the web site including:

- Adding new pages.
- Adding minutes
- Adding agendas.

New Business